

88 00796

✓ 7/13/87

INSTITUTE OF GOVERNMENTAL  
STUDIES LIBRARY

JUL 7 1987

UNIVERSITY OF CALIFORNIA

# SCENIC ROADWAYS ELEMENT

A Part of the Solano  
County General Plan







Digitized by the Internet Archive  
in 2024

<https://archive.org/details/C124893800>

# **SCENIC ROADWAYS ELEMENT**

**A Part of the Solano  
County General Plan**

Prepared for Solano County

by

**Sedway/Cooke**

Urban and Environmental  
Planners and Designers  
San Francisco, Calif.

May , 1977



Table of Contents

Adopted April 21, 1977  
Solano County Planning Commission

Donna Lenzi, Chairwoman

Gerald Allbright, Vice-Chairman

Ralph Moss

Stanley Anderson

William Courtland

James Moelk

Jan Stewart

Marvin Kinney

Diane H. Low

Clayne E. Munk, Planning Director

Adopted May 10, 1977  
Solano County Board of Supervisors

Thomas Hannigan, Chairman

Wallace Brazelton, Vice-Chairman

Robert Scofield

Richard Brann

Larry Asera

David Balmer, County Administrator

Note: Draft versions of this document were prepared jointly for Solano County and the cities of Fairfield, Vacaville and Suisun City. Each jurisdiction has carried the document through its own public hearing process; however, so that final adopted provisions of the plan may differ. It is recommended that the appropriate local planning agency be consulted for plan interpretation.





# Table of Contents

|  | <u>Page</u> |
|--|-------------|
| INTRODUCTION .....   | 1           |
| Purpose .....  | 1           |
| Scenic Roadways.....                                       | 2           |
| Approach.....  | 2           |
| Visual Units.....  | 2           |
| Policy Application.....                                    | 3           |
| <br>POLICIES .....   | 11          |
| General Requirements.....                                  | 11          |
| Specific Policies.....                                     | 13          |
| Foreground Components.....                                 | 13          |
| Distant View Components.....                               | 19          |
| Special Features.....                                      | 21          |
| <br>IMPLEMENTATION METHODS .....                           | 23          |
| Regulatory Methods.....                                    | 23          |
| Zoning.....  | 23          |
| Planned Unit Development.....                              | 23          |
| Sign Ordinance Modifications.....                          | 24          |
| Official Map Lines.....                                    | 24          |
| Design Review Procedures.....                              | 25          |
| Other Methods.....   | 25          |
| <br>APPENDIX   |             |
| A - Scenic Roadways in Solano County                       | 27          |
| <br><u>LIST OF FIGURES</u>                                 |             |
| Figure 1: Designated Scenic Roadways and Visual Units..... | 4           |
| Figure 2: Components of the Roadway View.....              | 5           |
| Figure 3: Foreground Views.....                            | 6-7         |
| Figure 4: Distant Views.....                               | 8-9         |





# Introduction

## Purpose

This Scenic Roadways Element has been formulated for the purpose of designating a scenic route system for the planning area, and to protect and improve that system while accommodating a reasonable, planned level of growth. It is not the intent of this element to place undue constraints or hardships upon the property owner who desires to develop his land. Rather the Scenic Roadways Element is viewed as a working document which provides advisory guidelines to assist the county in maintaining a balance between individual rights and the rights of county residents to enjoy a pleasing environment in which to live.

Due to the prevailing non-urban character of the county and land use policies currently set forth in related general plan elements which promote retention of the majority of the county's non-urban lands in their present status, the primary intent of the Scenic Roadways Element is to recognize and respect the distinctiveness of the various non-urban landscapes occurring throughout the county and to reinforce the intentions of the open space and conservation elements now in effect in the county and cities.

Towards this end, the scenic roadway policies function in two ways. First, they identify those features which contribute most to present scenic values along the designated roadways and establish explicit public policies for protection of these features. Second, they help ensure that new development within the scenic roadway corridor of an urban or suburban nature (all major subdivisions with densities greater than five acres per dwelling unit and commercial/industrial development) and which is permissible under other general plan provisions, is developed in a manner which respects the identified scenic attributes of the corridor.

Thus, in areas to be retained in agricultural use, the provisions are primarily directives to be followed by the county in its own public works projects and rezoning actions. In areas to be used for urban or suburban purposes, these policies serve as an added basis for review of development applications. Such review would be undertaken in conjunction with either the subdivision or PUD applications, EIR assessments where required, or with a design review application.

This Scenic Roadways Element should be seen as an initial step in the formulation of a county-wide community design element. Such an element should ultimately consist of two parts. The first would be primarily a protective one which recognizes and serves to preserve the value of scenic elements that currently exist. The second part would coordinate these protective policies into a comprehensive community design plan which would set forth design requirements. For example, policies for a county-wide park system, trails system, and scenic roadway network could be closely coordinated and integrated in the community design plan. The design element would serve to interrelate the visual and functional requirements of all general plan elements including land use, open space and conservation, housing, circulation, health and safety, and so on.



## Scenic Roadways

There is a considerable range of opinion as to what constitutes a scenic roadway. At one extreme, it is defined as a road driven only for pleasure when there is time to travel slowly and to enjoy the natural, rural views the roadway presents. At the opposite extreme, it is a road which provides a pleasant driving experience on the way to a specific destination. Such roads may be Interstate Freeways, or other heavily traveled roads, which offer the motorist a variety of scenery, including urban or industrial uses, long range vistas, or agricultural activities. Solano County is fortunate in that it has roads which meet the range of definitions of what is scenic, providing a broad spectrum of pleasurable driving experiences to its residents. The Solano County Scenic Roadways Element recognizes this variety and seeks to preserve the unique views which a number of its roads present. Routes which have been selected because of their significant scenic resources are indicated on Figure 1, and they are described in Appendix A.

A scenic roadway is defined as a route which traverses a scenic corridor of significant visual or cultural value. It consists of the following components:

Road right-of-way including the roadbed and adjacent lands in public control utilized for roadway protection, storm drainage, public utilities, pedestrian travel and roadside plantings. The roads can be further defined according to their operating characteristics (Freeways and Expressways, Major Thoroughfares, Minor Thoroughfares and Rural Roads). (See Appendix A.)

The scenic corridor which is the visible land area both within and outside the road right-of-way containing the scenic resources which can be viewed from the road.

## Approach

In formulating new planning policies with respect to the regulation and maintenance of a scenic roadway network as extensive as that designated for the planning area, the overriding consideration has been the need for administrative manageability, efficiency, and short range effectiveness. In that light, this element avoids an individual policy response to each designated scenic route. Instead, all routes are treated similarly in terms of a fixed set of visual components which in different combinations may be common to a number of routes.

### Visual Units

Based on field survey, each scenic route has been segmented into a number of visual units as mapped on Figure 1. The beginning and end of each segment or visual unit is signaled by a major change in landscape features as seen from the roadway. All of the visual units comprising each scenic route have been described and coded in Figure 1 in terms of a fixed number of distinct foreground (zero to one quarter mile) and distant views (over one quarter mile) as sketched on pages 5 through 8, which in different combinations may be common to a number of visual units.



In addition to the distinct foreground and distant components of each visual unit, a number of special features which should be recognized in the scenic route protection and improvement program have been noted along each route. Examples of such features are creeks, vista points, roadside shade trees, etc.

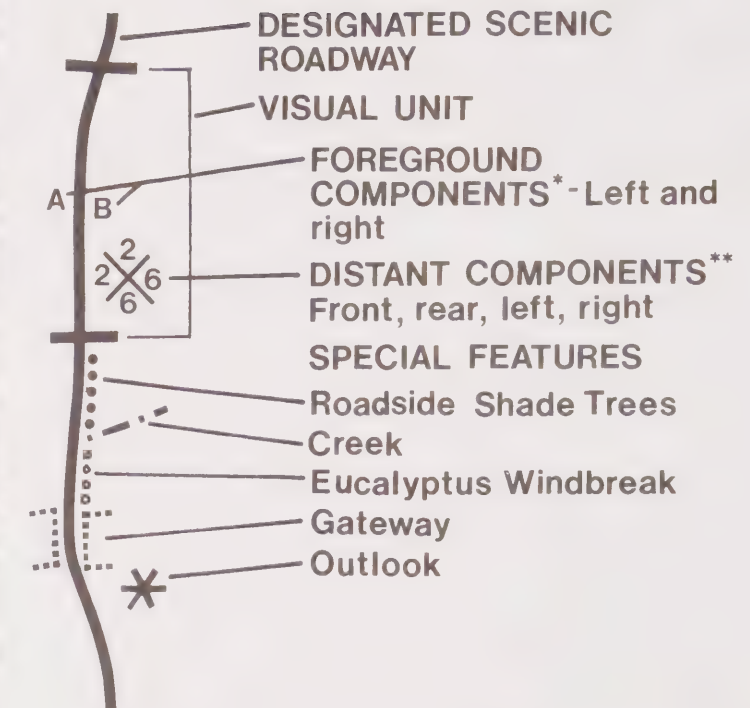
### Policy Application

The policies for scenic route protection and enhancement which follow are divided into two groups. The first consists of general policies that apply to all designated scenic roadways. The second group consists of a number of specific policies which are applicable on a visual unit and special feature basis. A set of such specific plan policies has been formulated for each classification of foreground and distant view in response to their visual characteristics and vulnerability, and for each special feature. Thus, policies which apply to a particular visual unit are those which are associated with the foreground and distant view components of that unit, as listed on pages 11 through 19, and with any special features which may occur in the unit, as listed on pages 21 and 22.





**FIGURE 1**  
**DESIGNATED SCENIC**  
**ROADWAYS AND**  
**VISUAL UNITS**



\*FOREGROUND VIEW COMPONENTS-see pp.6&7

- |                                      |                                |
|--------------------------------------|--------------------------------|
| A River View                         | F Flat Grassland               |
| B Marshland                          | G Flat Cropland                |
| C Rolling Grassland                  | H Vineyards and Young Orchards |
| D Grass and Woodland Hills           | J Mature Orchards              |
| E Steep Hills with Rock Outcroppings | K Residential                  |
|                                      | L Urban                        |

\*\*DISTANT VIEW COMPONENTS -see pp. 8 & 9

- |  |                                      |
|--|--------------------------------------|
| 1 Bay                                  | 7 Steep Hills with Rock Outcroppings |
| 2 Flatlands, Marshlands or Open Fields | 8 Vaca Mountains                     |
| 3 Open Fields with Distant Windbreaks  | 9 Long Range Urban Views over Bay    |
| 4 Orchard Lands                        | 10 Background Urbanization           |
| 5 Rolling Grassland                    |                                      |
| 6 Grass and Woodland Hills             |                                      |

GENERAL PLAN REVISION PROGRAM  
 COUNTY OF SOLANO · CITY OF FAIRFIELD  
 CITY OF VACAVILLE · CITY OF SUISUN CITY



SEDWAY/COOKE

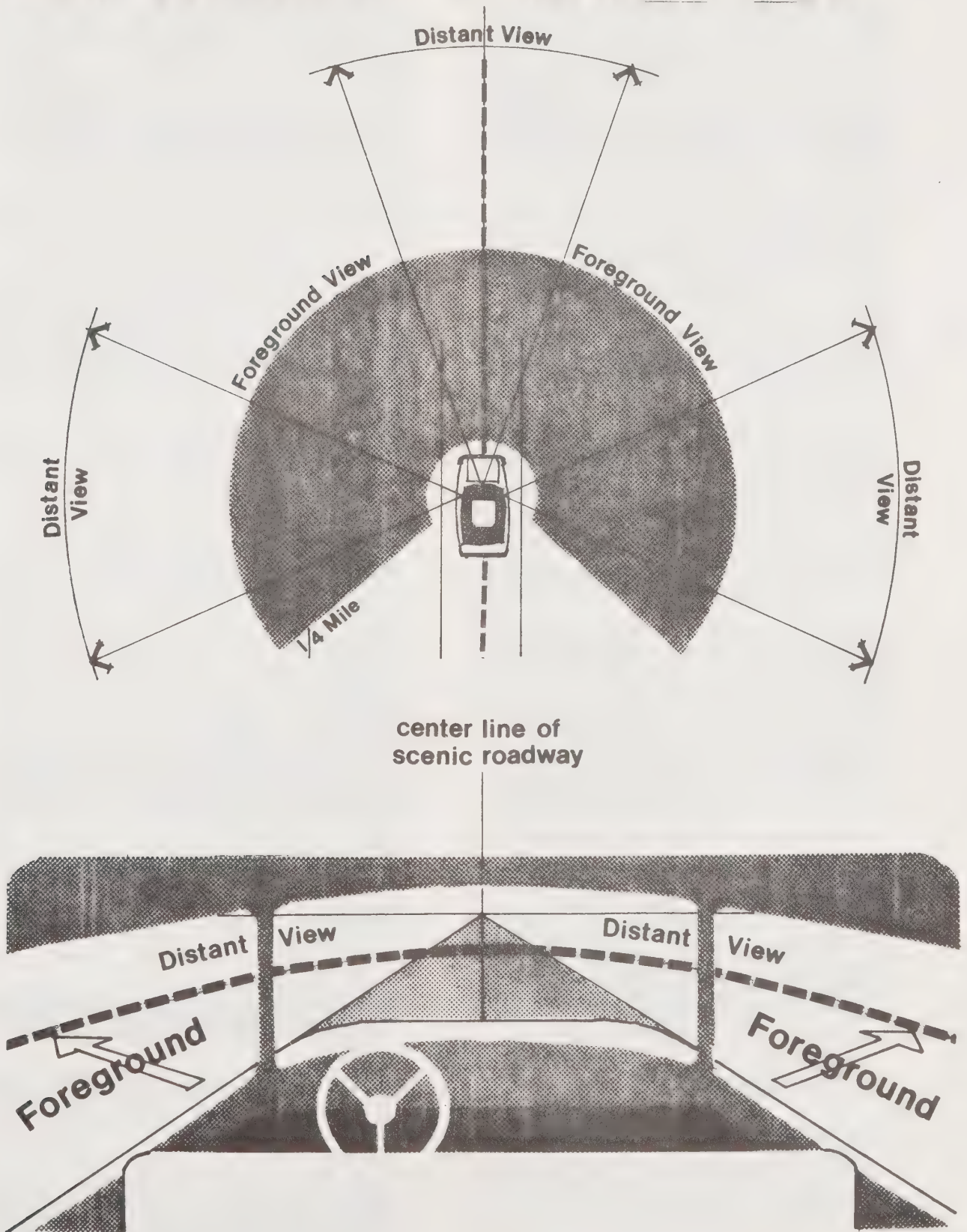
SCALE IN FEET 0 5,000' 10,000'







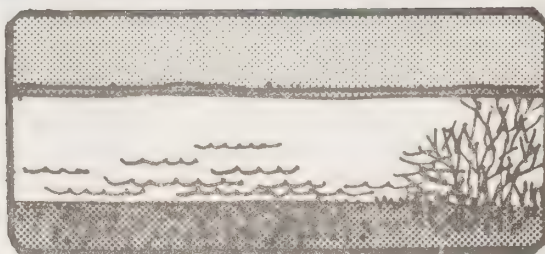
**FIGURE 2**  
**COMPONENTS OF A ROADWAY VIEW**



## FIGURE 3 FOREGROUND VIEWS

### A River View

Roadside views of the expansive and placid Solano County sections of the Sacramento River provide the county with one of its most unique and spectacular visual experiences. Opportunities for open river views from adjacent or overlooking roadways in the county are limited however to relatively brief route segments as indicated in Figure 1.



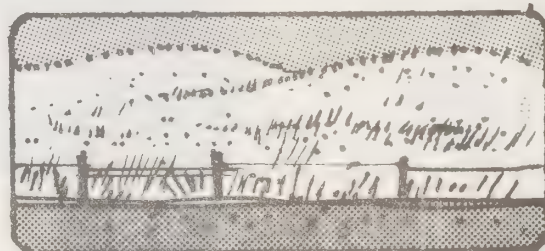
### B Marshland

Marshlands provide travelers on adjacent scenic roadways with a sense of openness, views of a unique ecological system, and long range vistas. The expansive, uninterrupted flat surface of these marshlands, and the vegetative textures, graceful sloughs, and associated wildlife activity are unique and highly valued.



### C Rolling Grassland

Here, the fine, graceful texture of grassland is combined with a hilly topography to create a distinctly smooth, rolling terrain, generally uninterrupted by other vegetative groupings.



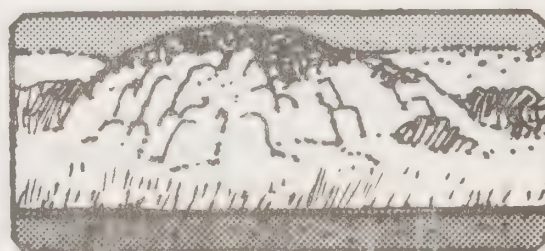
### D Grass and Woodland Hills

Here visual features are similar to rolling grassland, but are more varying and thus, less delicate due to the periodic occurrence of native tree groupings including oak, laurel, madrone, and associated brush.



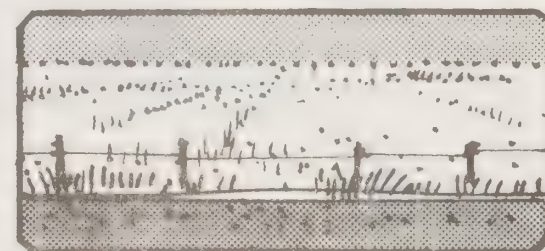
### E Steep Hills with Rock Outcroppings

The scenic value of this visual phenomenon is clear. The dramatic scale, form, color, and setting of these distinctive rock outcroppings are beautiful and highly unusual. Thus, these interesting geologic formations are well-known natural landmarks, particularly where they are visible from designated scenic roadways.



### F Flat Grassland

The visual attributes of the county's flat grasslands include their uninterrupted expansiveness, their fine and delicate textures, and their changing colors. The visual value of many of these foreground views is often added to by a contrasting hilly background.





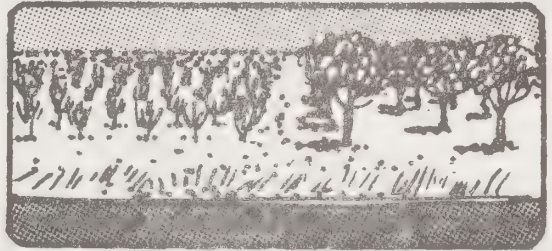
## G Flat Cropland

Flat croplands are interesting and popular scenic roadway features in Solano County due largely to the visual effect of moving past the uniformly regimented rows of crops. Flat cropland views are also valuable in conveying an understanding of the agricultural productivity and history of these important county lands.



## H Vineyards and Young Orchards

The uniform and rhythmic effect of grapevine and tree spacing is another visual experience valued by site-seeing motorists. Similar to foreground component G, these views are also valuable in conveying an understanding of the agricultural productivity and history of important county lands.



## J Mature Orchard

The confining and sun-filtering effect of mature orchard growth adjacent to the roadside is also a highly valued visual experience, particularly in the sunny seasons when the frequency of scenic motoring increases.



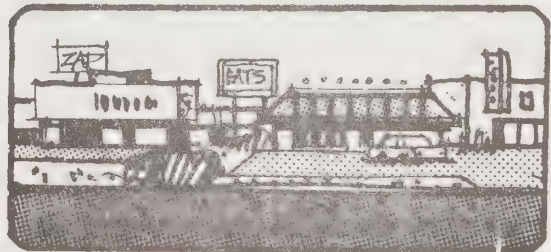
## K Residential

The scenic value of this foreground view is based primarily on its interest to motorists in a cultural, community, and neighborhood context. Such residential foregrounds are often enhanced visually in Solano County by a natural backdrop (distant hills, etc.)



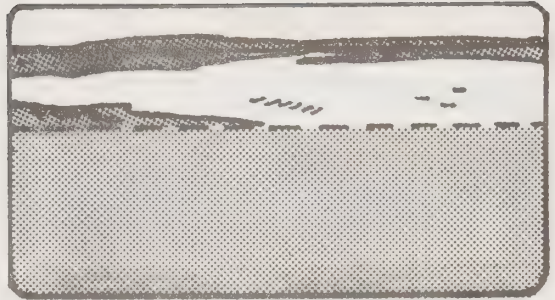
## L Urban (commercial/industrial)

The scenic value of the foreground of this visual unit is based upon the same factors as are residential units, plus the added desire of many motorists to identify roadside commercial uses which provide travel related services.

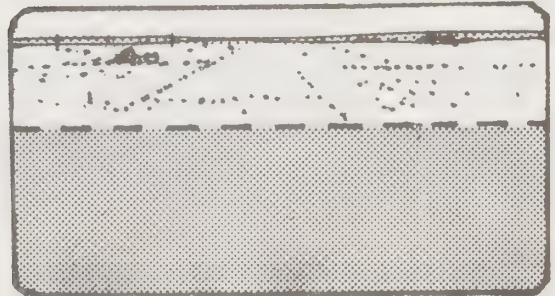


## FIGURE 4 DISTANT VIEWS

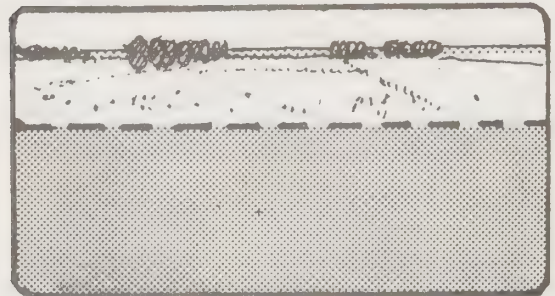
### 1 Bay



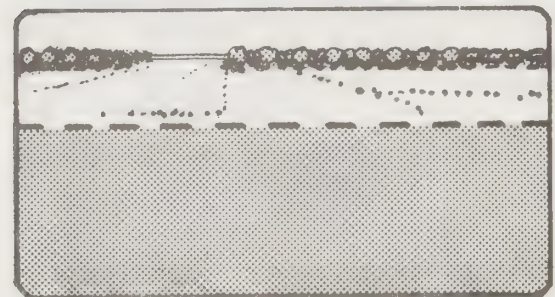
### 2 Flatlands, Marshlands, or Open Fields



### 3 Open Fields with Distant Windbreaks



### 4 Orchard Lands

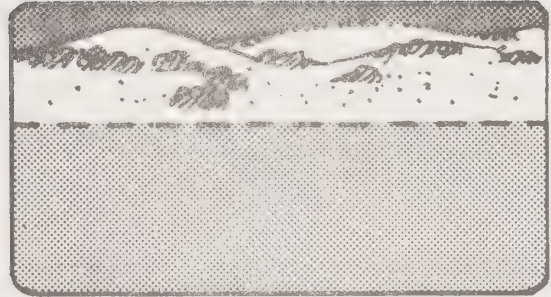


### 5 Rolling Grassland

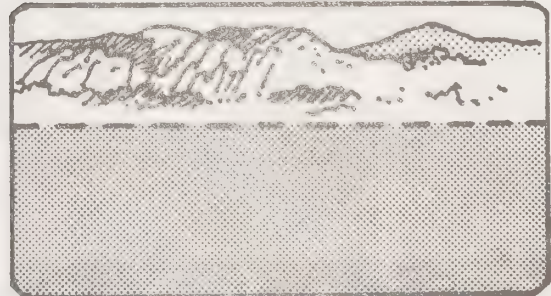




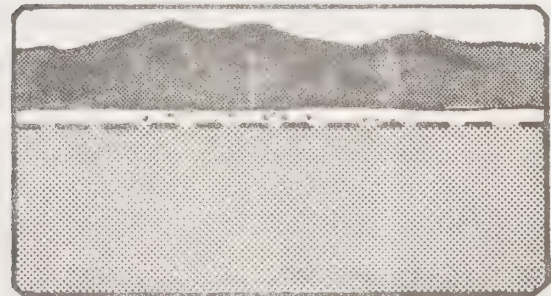
**6 Grass and Woodland Hills**



**7 Steep Hills with Rock Outcroppings**



**8 Vaca Mountains**



**9 Long Range Urban Views Over Bay**



**10 Background Urbanization**







# Policies

The general and specific policies set forth below provide a series of guidelines to be used by the county in its land development guidance procedures. It is the intent that these provisions be employed as criteria to be adhered to by all future land development which falls within the visual components of any of the designated scenic roadways. All applications for suburban or urban uses (all major subdivisions with densities greater than five acres per dwelling unit and commercial/industrial developments) should be reviewed for compliance with these provisions. In agricultural areas, current zoning provisions which are supportive of these aims should be retained. Where present agricultural zoning provisions promote land use patterns at variance with these general and specific policies, modifications should be made to achieve consistency with the Scenic Roadway Element.

## General Requirements

The following general policies apply to all foreground and distant view components of all designated scenic roadways:

1. Current general plan provisions of the county which designate foreground and distant view components of scenic roadways for agricultural and other open space uses should be retained.
2. Commercial and industrial development along a designated scenic roadway should be subject to design review procedures to insure that development is visually compact with parking arranged to be visually unobtrusive and to avoid interference with the normal traffic flow.
3. The established character of narrow, curving scenic roadways on the hilly west sections of the planning area should be preserved. The winding routes, often tightly hemmed in by roadside vegetation and steep topography are highly appropriate for such situations where the emphasis should not be



on speed, but on revealing a rich visual driving experience. Pressures to improve such roads to accommodate greater traffic speeds should be resisted. Instead, ways should be sought to divert faster traffic to alternate routes if such a choice exists.

4. The number of man-made interruptions or incidents along a scenic roadway (housing, commercial uses, signs, driveways, etc.) should be limited to maintain the current visual values as the prevalent feature of the route. Individual driveways and garages, for example, should not connect directly with a scenic roadway unless necessitated by severe topographic constraints. Rather, they should combine before intersecting with the scenic route to minimize visual and functional disruption.

5. Placement of off-site advertising along a designated scenic roadway should be prohibited, except where provisions are made, as part of a standardized, public, onroad sign program, for providing signing within the roadway right-of-way for roadway related services. Such a program could provide a series of signs of similar design, identifying food, lodging, and other road-related services by type and by the symbol or logotype of the proprietor (Shell Oil, Western Motel, McDonald's, etc.).

6. Limitations should be placed on development phasing. No excavated or cleared site within the primary view corridor should be allowed to stand idle beyond a given time (time should be stipulated in the grading ordinance). (This requirement is directed specifically to the practice of preparing a site for development through clearing and rough grading and then allowing the scarred site to stand idle until a prospective developer is found.)

7. Travel speeds should be limited to levels which do not require imposition of roadway improvement standards which would substantially alter the present visual experience of the scenic roadway.

8. The county and cities should institute a special program of roadside maintenance (landscape maintenance or replacement, litter retrieval, etc.) along scenic routes, recognizing the fact that the immediate roadside environment has a great impact on the motorist and tends to color his or her total scenic roadway experience.

9. Pullovers with litter cans should be provided at regular intervals throughout the scenic roadway network for convenient disposal of litter. Special points of interest such as outlooks, creeks, lakes, clusters of roadside shade trees, etc., should be favored in locating pullover sites. Pullovers should be located and designed to minimize possible conflicts with nearby agricultural uses (orchard pilfering, frightened stock, etc.).

## Specific Policies

All designated scenic roadways should be subject to a combination of specific policies based on the composition of each visual unit along the route. The combination of policies associated with the foreground and distant components of each visual unit (and with any special features) as noted on Figure 1 apply to all development that falls within view of the designated scenic roadway.

The foreground component of each visual unit (up to one quarter mile from the road edge) is subject to the related specific policies listed below:

| FOREGROUND<br>COMPONENT | SPECIFIC<br>POLICIES |
|-------------------------|----------------------|
|-------------------------|----------------------|

### A. River Views



The expansiveness and continuous horizontal character of a river view is highly vulnerable to visual disruption by development in the foreground component. In particular, the level of natural topography tends to visually exaggerate vertical man-made elements. The following development guidelines serve to minimize such disruption:

1. Restrictions should be placed on non-essential, inappropriate uses between the scenic route and the primary river view. Only those commercial uses or public facilities which are river-oriented and require direct water access (marinas, boat launching) or immediate river views (restaurants) should be permitted.
2. Signs for commercial purposes should be attached to and made an integral part of the structure to which they relate. Use of free-standing signs should be prohibited unless placed in a manner which will not obstruct river views.
3. Where practical undergrounding of utility lines is recommended between the scenic roadway corridor and river views.

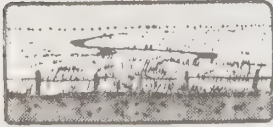


FOREGROUND  
COMPONENT

SPECIFIC  
POLICIES

---

B. Marshlands



Intensive development cannot be visually absorbed into a marsh landscape without seriously disrupting the delicate foreground and unprotected background view components. Intensive development here can also result in disruption of the local ecosystem which supports the marsh and its unique and delicate visual character.

1. Immediately adjoining dry lands and uplands within and around a marsh should remain in open space use (grazing, cropland, or other extensive uses).
2. Existing animal and vegetative habitats should be protected from encroachment due to their own visual value and their role in maintaining the marsh ecosystem and its overall scenic value.
3. Public roadway construction and improvement activities should be subject to restrictions permitting the natural water movement necessary to sustain the marsh environment.
4. Since such a flat and expansive natural environment tends to exaggerate vertical elements, undergrounding of utility lines is highly recommended.

C. Rolling Grassland



1. Allowable building construction or road construction which overlaps such a foreground component and is in view of the designated scenic roadway should be subject to site and design review by qualified county or city staff or by an urban design consultant to the staff.
2. Where home or other construction of a visually significant nature is permitted within such a foreground component in view of a designated scenic roadway, one of the following three alternative design approaches should be considered:
  - a. Avoid locating development on the steeper slopes (15 percent or greater), upper hill-sides, hilltops and ridges where such development would be highly visible and discordant with the barren and smooth natural topography.

FOREGROUND  
COMPONENT

SPECIFIC  
POLICIES

---

b. Soften the contrast between the proposed development and the rolling grassland through the siting of construction on low-lying areas in clustering, provision of sufficient setback from the scenic roadway; and use of building form (low profiles), materials and color subordinate to the surrounding natural environment. These measures together will minimize disruption of natural land forms. Heavy use of berms and planting of native and semi-native vegetation should also be encouraged in this design approach to screen buildings, roads, and parking from the roadway view.

c. As a basic design feature, emphasize the contrast between the proposed development and its natural setting through provision of a substantial setback from the roadway to maintain an open foreground, together with dramatic and sensitive massing of all structures to achieve a focused, compact development configuration.

3. In areas slated for suburban or urban uses which overlap this foreground component, allowable densities should be reviewed to ensure that an intensity of development is not allowed which cannot be made compatible with the natural setting. Compatibility of a proposed development with its natural setting should be maximized through density restrictions which adequately reflect the site's visual and natural features.

4. Since rolling grassland is highly vulnerable to visual disruption by development activity, grading of a development site should be restricted to minimize alteration of the natural terrain. Padding should be prohibited and the use of adaptive foundations should be encouraged to accommodate topographic variations while minimizing cut and fill.

5. New landscaping and introduced planting which will be visible from a designated scenic roadway should include heavy use of native species. Hill-tops and upper hillsides shall be protected from non-native plant invasion.

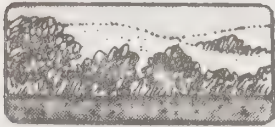


FOREGROUND  
COMPONENT

SPECIFIC  
POLICIES

---

D. Grass-Woodland Hills



All the above provisions for rolling grassland foreground components (C) apply also to grass-woodland hills with the following additions and exceptions:

1. On highly visible steeper slopes (15 percent or more) development should be limited to areas where existing woodland will screen structures to minimize exposure to scenic roadway view.
2. Grading within wooded areas should not encroach upon the root structure or root crowns of existing native oak and laurels nor upon riparian areas.

E. Steep Hills with  
Rock Outcroppings



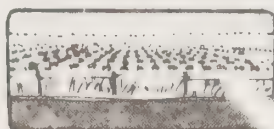
All provisions for rolling grassland foreground components (C) apply also to steep hills with rock outcroppings with the following additions:

1. To protect and preserve the dramatic beauty and landmark quality of these unique Solano County rock outcroppings, the rock formations in general should be kept free of structures. In particular, building siting on top of or on the upper sides of such formations should not be permitted.
2. Foreground development should be sited in a manner which does not obstruct or disrupt the view of these unique land forms as seen from the scenic roadway.

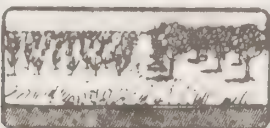
F. Flat Grasslands



G. Flat Cropland



H. Vineyards and  
Young Orchards



The Visual distinction between flat grassland, flat cropland, vineyards and young orchards, and mature orchards is often shortlived due to crop rotation practices and the fact that orchards mature on a relatively short-term basis (15 to 20 years). Due to such agricultural practices and characteristics, these four foreground components are each subject to the development criteria which follow regarding the introduction of structures and other relatively long-term uses. When planted with grasses or level row crops, these lands have a particularly high vulnerability to visual disruption due to a lack of varying topography and heavy vegetation which would soften and screen structures and land alteration from view. Thus, the development capacity of these foreground components is highly limited.

FOREGROUND  
COMPONENT

SPECIFIC  
POLICIES

---

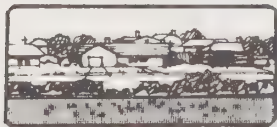
1. Current general plan provisions for agricultural use should be maintained. Related zoning provisions should be modified where necessary to maintain the current open appearance of large parcel areas and deep setbacks.

J. Mature Orchards



- a. Setbacks from the roadside property line of approximately 200 feet should be encouraged and at least 100 feet should be required for allowable structures in order to minimize the prominence of a structure and its interference with the open appearance of these foreground components.
  - b. In order to maintain a low frequency of roadside structures which is compatible with these foreground components, large site zoning should be maintained or, if necessary, instituted (specifically, 40 acre minimum parcels) in conjunction with a minimum road frontage requirement of 500 feet.
2. Only farm dwellings and structures which can be demonstrated to be auxiliary to the agricultural land use designation should be allowed.
  3. Signs which are auxiliary to a commercial use should be prohibited unless the sign is an integral part of a related structure and does not protrude above the structure more than five (5) feet in height.
  4. Where practical, undergrounding of utilities is desirable, particularly in urban or suburban areas, where conventional telephone and electrical distribution lines disrupt vulnerable background views including Background Components 5, 6, 7, and 9.

K. Residential



1. A program of street landscaping (shade trees, etc.) should be introduced where necessary in residential neighborhoods and commercial areas along the scenic roadway in order to visually unify and enhance these foreground components.

L. Urban  
(Commercial/Industrial)



2. Protection of vulnerable distant view components from visual obstructions associated with residential use should be a primary concern.



FOREGROUND  
COMPONENT

SPECIFIC  
POLICIES

---

3. Undergrounding of utilities is highly recommended where vulnerable background views are obstructed.

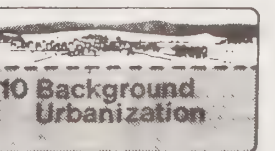
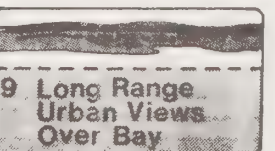
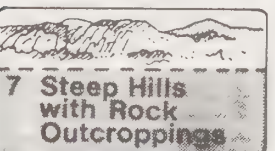
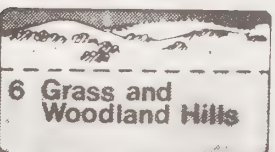
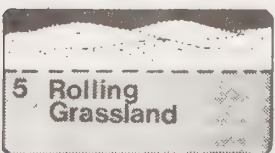
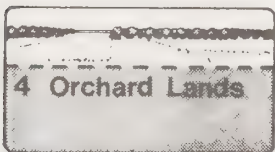
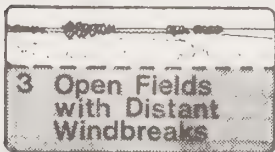
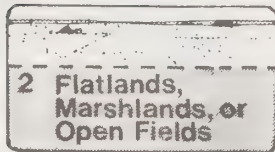
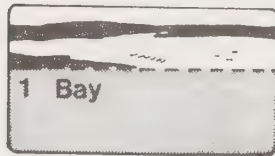
4. Special consideration should be given in the development review process to the design and materials used for roofs where the scenic roadway is elevated above the grade level of the housing or commercial area.

5. Signs associated with a commercial use shall be an integrated part of a related structure and should not protrude above the structure more than five (5) feet in height.

6. Where off-street parking is provided devices should be used in such facilities to reduce the visual impact of expansive paved surfaces and parked automobiles, such as earth berming, associated tree planting, and other landscaping.

DISTANT  
VIEW  
COMPONENTS

SPECIFIC  
POLICIES



Note. The following specific policies should apply to all distant view components designated on Figure 1:

1. Any proposed foreground land use which is allowable under other specific policies of this element should be designed to minimize obstruction of the distant component of a visual unit, as designated on Figure 1.

2. Where urban and suburban land uses are permitted on lands within the distant component of a visual unit as designated on Figure 1, one of the two basic design alternatives described in this element under Foreground Visual Unit C, Rolling Grassland, Policy #3, page 15, should be encouraged.

3. Where urban or suburban land uses are permitted on lands within a designated distant view component (Figure 1), the following measures should also be taken by the county and cities.

a. Limit overall intensity to low levels in order to minimize the extent of general visual disruption or alteration of the primary elements of the distant view.

b. Avoid the introduction of visually discordant secondary elements such as rooftop television antennas, disruptive overhead utility lines, billboards, etc.



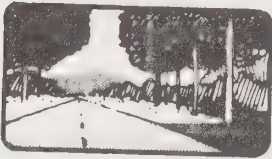


## SPECIAL FEATURES

## SPECIFIC POLICIES

---

### A. Roadside Shade Trees



1. Visual units which are distinguished by mature shade trees lining the side(s) of the scenic roadway (locations indicated in Figure 1), should be protected and maintained. Such tree rows which are located within scenic roadway rights-of-way should be maintained by the county or cities. Where appropriate, these shade tree rows should be maintained and reinforced by a program of replacing diseased or aged trees.

### B. Creeks



1. Development should be prohibited from obstructing views from a scenic roadway of creeks, their shores, and their adjoining riparian features.
2. Realignment or other road construction on a designated scenic roadway which will result in encroachment upon a stream channel should be prohibited.
3. New creek crossings by a designated scenic roadway should be by means of a bridge of open construction rather than a culvert. The latter would constitute a visual barrier disrupting the creek view.

### C. Eucalyptus Windbreaks



1. Maintenance and protection of existing windbreaks should be encouraged to provide a contrasting visual element on flatland landscapes and to call attention to distant farm development or to places where major changes occur in the alignment or the scenic roadway.
2. Where appropriate, expansion or addition of new windbreaks should be encouraged to identify distant changes in visual units, road alignments, land use activities, etc.



## SPECIAL FEATURES

## SPECIFIC POLICIES

---

### D. Gateways

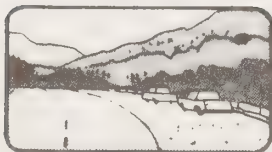


1. At designated visual gateways (Figure 1), construction and associated planting which obstruct views or reduce the sense of entry to or exit from a view shed should be avoided.

2. The introduction of roadside planting (shade trees, etc.) should be considered as a means of emphasizing the gateway effect.

3. Design of roadway improvements (road grading and alignment) at designated visual gateways should serve to maximize views and the gateway effect.

### E. Outlooks



1. Scenic pullovers and convenient vista points could be provided for the scenic roadway user at major outlooks as designated on Figure 1.

# Implementation Methods

The provisions of the Scenic Roadway Element are designed to serve as a clear basis for county and city review of the visual implications of private development actions along designated scenic roadway corridors as well as the official basis for public improvement actions such as scenic road construction or modification and the placement of utilities in view of a scenic route. Recommended implementation approaches are described below.

## Regulatory Methods

### Zoning

Since the visual values which are predominant in the Solano County scenic roadways network are those associated with the extensive open space areas of the county which are served by these roads, the most significant means of implementing many of the land use policies which have been enumerated herein will be to retain the county and city zoning designations which limit land use in many foreground and distant view components to agricultural and other open space uses. In addition, agricultural zoning designations along a number of these scenic routes should be modified in accordance with the minimum parcel area, setback, and roadway frontage guidelines set forth in the Specific Policies section of this general plan element. For example, visual units currently zoned A-10 or A-20 should be rezoned to an A-40 classification with appropriate setback and frontage specifics to avoid further divisions of the large parcel areas which currently provide the valued open space appearance.

In addition to maintaining and strengthening current open space zoning designations, the county and cities should also expand their regulatory programs to include the following:

### Planned Unit Development

To minimize the visually disruptive effects which can result from conversion of lands along a scenic roadway from agricultural and other open space uses to an urban or suburban use, all major subdivision applications with densities of five acres or less and commercial/industrial applications should be required to submit plans in accordance with the planned unit development provisions of the responsible local government in the following situations:



1. Where the application includes lands which are within 1000 feet of a designated scenic roadway and are classified in any of the following foreground component categories: A. River View, B. Marshland, F. Flat Grassland, G. Flat Cropland, H. Vineyards and Young Orchards, J. Mature Orchard, K. Residential, or L. Urban (Commercial/Industrial);
2. Where the application includes lands within 1500 feet of a designated scenic highway and is classified in any of the following foreground component categories: C. Rolling Grassland, D. Grass and Woodland Hills, or E. Steep Hills with Rock Outcroppings;
3. Where the application includes lands classified in any of the following Distant View categories: 5. Rolling Grassland, 6. Grass and Woodland Hills, or 7. Steep Hills with Rock Outcroppings; and when the staff has determined that the visual prominence of the site from designated scenic roadways is sufficient to merit special design attention.

#### Sign Ordinance Modifications

Specific policies herein which apply to certain foreground view components specify conditions governing the use of signs including, in some instances, size, height and placement. Implementation of these policies can be achieved in either of two ways: (1) through adoption of a series of new sign provisions which apply to various segments of the scenic roadway, or (2) through use of design review procedures which would override present sign requirements. The latter method is discussed in a separate section below on Design Review Procedures.

Use of the sign ordinance approach would require drafting of a series of new sign districts for various roadway segments. Provisions for each district would be consistent with the specific policies of the various foreground component categories included in the district. Sign districts should distinguish between the signing requirements of agricultural-related sales in orchard, vineyard and cropland areas and the signing requirements of roadway-related services along major travel routes. The particular provisions should also recognize the differences in travel speed on the various routes and thus, the need for different requirements regarding size and placement of signs.

#### Official Map Lines

The provisions of the Scenic Roadway Element call for variations in the setback of structures along designated scenic roadways based on recognition and protection of landscape features inherent to the area. In order to administer these provisions, the county and cities could, where necessary to carry out the specific policies formulated for the different visual units, map and adopt official map lines requiring building setbacks in excess of those normally required in the zoning ordinance. Although official map lines have conventionally been used to protect against encroachment by structures along rights-of-way which might have to be expanded to meet future travel demands, use of official map procedures for protecting the scenic quality of the roadway would also be appropriate. Official map lines could be administered as a part of the normal building permit approval process.

## Design Review Procedures

The regulatory provisions suggested above are designed to reduce reliance on design review to carry out scenic roadway policies. There may be, however, areas highly subject to change where the county or cities may wish to backup these regulatory provisions with additional design review procedures. It is recommended that a design review ordinance be adopted to enable the county and cities to undertake such review measures. The ordinance should be drafted in a manner which establishes the policies or the Scenic Roadway Element and other portions of the general plan as the official criteria to be used in reviewing a development proposal and determining its acceptability. The intent is to establish a more precise, plan-based review process rather than a process which relies primarily on generalized statements of intent which are subject to wide variations in interpretation.

A plan based approach would also provide a firmer legal basis for the design review procedure, since the local legislative body will have formally adopted the review criteria (the general plan).

It is also recommended that the design review function be carried out by the county or city staff rather than by an appointed design review committee, since a staff arrangement is more likely to result in consistent decisions. Aspects to be covered in design review should be carefully limited to include only those which directly relate to adopted policies applying to the specific site. In one area, for example, only the siting of structures might be regulated while in another the siting of structures plus the building profiles and associated landscaping may be regulated.

## Other Measures

In addition to the regulatory methods described above, implementation of the Scenic Roadway Element can be carried out by the cities and county in their public improvement program. Specifically, the Scenic Roadway Element should be consulted and applied as a basis for determining the priority of State PUC utility undergrounding funds. Similarly, the Scenic Roadway Element should provide a basis for determining the level and type of roadway improvements to be made on scenic routes. Although scenic concerns are not the sole, and in many instances, not the primary bases for roadway design decisions, the provisions of the Scenic Roadway Element should be used as a basis for determining if pressures for increases in roadway speed and thus changes in roadway lane width, curvature, shoulder size, etc., are appropriate.

Finally, the county or cities may wish to retain a design consultant to assist their staffs in reviewing projects for compliance with the scenic roadway provisions. This arrangement has the advantage of retaining direct staff involvement, while supplementing staff when necessary with outside design assistance. At the same time, if the consultant were retained on a regular basis, it would promote consistency in the decision making process. Financing of this service could be provided for through a review fee requirement for each application.

SOLANO COUNTY PROJECT STAFF

Clayne Munk, Planning Director  
Charles Moore, Assistant  
Planning Director

David Hubbell, Project Planner  
Tom Carver, Graphics  
Bill Dusich, Word Processing

SEDWAY/COOKE PROJECT STAFF

Thomas Cooke, Partner-In-Charge  
Paul H. Sedway

John Wagstaff, Associate-In-Charge  
Jack Schnitzius  
Lynda Wagstaff  
Darlene Luppino  
Victoria Tregoning



## APPENDIX A

### SCENIC ROADWAYS IN SOLANO COUNTY

#### FREEWAYS-EXPRESSWAYS

1. Interstate 80 from Carquinez Strait at Vallejo  
to Solano-Yolo County line at Davis.
2. Interstate 680 from Carquinez Strait at Benicia  
to Interstate 80 at Cordelia.
3. Interstate 505 from Interstate 80 at Vacaville  
to Solano-Yolo County line near Winters.

#### MAJOR THOROUGHFARE

1. State Highway 37 from Solano-Sonoma County line  
to Interstate 80 at Vallejo.
2. State Highway 12 from Solano-Napa County line  
to Interstate 80, and  
from Southern Pacific R.R. at Fairfield  
to Solano-Sacramento County line at Rio Vista.

#### MINOR THOROUGHFARE

1. Columbus Parkway and Lake Herman Road  
from Interstate 80 at Vallejo  
to Interstate 680 at Benicia.
2. Green Valley Road  
from Interstate 80 at Cordelia  
to Rockville Road.
3. Rockville Road  
from Green Valley Road  
to Suisun Valley Road.
4. Suisun Valley Road  
from Rockville Road  
to Solano-Napa County line.
5. Oliver Road  
from Interstate 80 at Fairfield  
to Mankas Corner Road and Waterman Blvd.
6. Mankas Corner Road  
from Oliver Road and Waterman Blvd.  
to Suisun Valley Road.



C124893800

## APPENDIX A (continued)

7. Cherry Glen Road and Pleasants Valley Road  
from Interstate 80 south of Vacaville  
to Solano-Yolo County line.
8. Putah Creek Road  
from Pleasants Valley Road along Putah Creek  
to Stevenson Bridge Road.
9. State Highway 113  
from Interstate 80 at Dixon  
to State Highway 12 between Fairfield and Rio Vista.

## RURAL ROAD

1. Grizzly Island Road  
from State Highway 12 at Suisun City  
to the end near the Montezuma Slough.





